



Scotland

AGAINST SPIN

Dear Supporters,

July 2015, Issue 29

Welcome to a bumper summer edition of the SAS Newsletter!

Keeping up with the news and understanding the plethora of policy statements, industry reactions and wind farm decisions of the last few weeks has been harder than ever. But as anti-wind farm campaigners we've also never been more jubilant.

As I write, another gem arrives. Esbjorn Wilmar, Managing Director, Infinergy is huffing and puffing over the Scottish Government's ground-breaking decision to reject its 24 turbine wind farm at Limekiln in Caithness because of its impact on wild land.

No one can deny that we are seeing a seismic shift in the world of wind. The public money tap is finally being turned off. Governments here and in countries as far apart as Germany and Australia are realising the money for renewables has run out and that more turbines will not fix the energy crisis. The parasites of the wind industry are squealing as never before, the days when they could gorge themselves on our money well and truly past. The moral high ground they have occupied for so long is slipping away, and it won't be long before they are as reviled as bankers.

This Newsletter brings you our guide to the changing policy landscape at Westminster, and progress reports on negative impacts of wind from water contamination to noise. The problems of wind development are becoming ever more mainstream and recognised as shown by two Scottish Government studies we report on. Enjoy!



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THE BEGINNING OF THE END....

The momentous announcement in the House of Commons on June 18 had many of us pinching ourselves. Not only was a government keeping its pre-election promise only weeks after taking office, but time was finally being called on wind subsidies. As subsidies form the life-blood of the wind industry, this felt like its death-knell. Certainly the industry and its supporters in the SNP have been squealing as never before, their spin machines in overdrive.

The Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (Amber Rudd):

'I am now setting out proposals to end new subsidies for onshore wind, specifically in relation to the renewables obligation (RO). Onshore wind is currently subsidised through three schemes: contracts for difference (CfDs) introduced by the last Government, and the renewables obligation and feed-in tariffs introduced previously.

'With regard to CfDs, we have the tools available to implement our manifesto commitments on onshore wind and I will set out how I will do so when announcing plans in relation to further CfD allocations. I will also shortly be considering options for continued support for community onshore wind projects through the feed-in tariff (FITs) as part of the review that my Department is conducting this year.

'The RO supports the overwhelming majority of current and future onshore wind capacity. Unlike CfDs, which introduce competition for subsidy and therefore drive costs down more quickly, the RO is demand-led and so poses more risk of pressure on consumer bills from increased demand for the subsidy. I am therefore announcing today that we will be introducing primary legislation to close the RO to new onshore wind from 1 April 2016—a year earlier than planned.

'My Department's analysis indicates that, after taking into account an early closure, onshore wind deployment under the RO will be in the region of 11.6 GW. In addition to the 0.75 GW of onshore wind that has secured a CfD, this puts us above the middle of the range set out in the EMR delivery plan, our best estimate of what we would need to meet our 2020 targets. It is therefore appropriate to curtail further deployment of onshore wind, balancing the interests of onshore wind developers with those of the wider public.

'To protect investor confidence in the wider renewables sector, I am proposing a grace period which would continue to give access to support under the RO to those projects which, as of today, already have planning consent, a grid connection offer and acceptance, and evidence of land rights for the site on which their project will be built. I believe this draws the line in the right place but I want to hear views from the industry and other stakeholders before framing the terms of the legislation.

'I intend that any final proposals are applied across Great Britain and I am in the process of consulting with Scottish and Welsh Ministers on this matter. Since energy policy is devolved in Northern Ireland, I am currently in discussions with Ministers there to agree how our commitments on onshore wind will be implemented in Northern Ireland.'

The full record can be read at [Hansard 18 Jun 2015 : Column 10WS](#)

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What does the statement mean in practice? Sadly, it's not the end of all subsidies. In particular any wind developments which already have subsidy contracts - be they for feed-in-tariffs (FiTs), renewable obligation certificates (ROCs) or contracts for difference (CfDs) - are unaffected. The FiT and CfD regimes for new applications are continuing as before. Contracts for FiTs last for 20 years, ROCs for 25 years and CfDs for 15 years. With a record number of schemes presently under construction, the burden on consumers will continue to grow. Combined green energy subsidies are heading towards £9 billion a year by 2020, when



each household nationwide will be contributing £170 per year.

The only subsidies being cut at this point are ROCs. The scheme was always scheduled to close on March 31st 2017 in favour of CfDs so Amber Rudd is merely closing ROCs a year early for new entrants. However, she has given a number of unbuilt projects a 'grace period'. If a project had planning consent, a grid connection offered and accepted, and land rights on June 18 2015, it can still get ROCs if it is commissioned before 31 March 2016. Furthermore, if such a project's commissioning is held up beyond this date only because of radar or grid connection delays, it can still qualify for ROCs if it is commissioned before 31 March 2017. 'Commissioning' is a technical term used to describe the process whereby a turbine is tested and signed off as ready to become operational.

No one knows how many projects qualify for these grace periods, and so will still get ROCs. Certainly any developer who had planning consent, a grid connection and land rights on June 18 will be pulling out all the stops to build and commission his turbines before 31 March 2016 (or possibly if there are aviation or grid delays, by 31 March 2017). To any qualifying project, ROCs offer 25 years of index-linked subsidy at a considerably higher rate than that established by the first CfD auction earlier this year. CfDs, on the other hand, require developers to compete against each other for the lowest subsidy.

So it's no surprise the wind industry is desperate to maximise the number of projects which can access ROCs. The Scottish Government has wasted no time in crying foul on the cheeky grounds that Scotland would be disproportionately affected as a disproportionately large level (70%) of UK wind development takes place here (don't we know it!). In [answer to a written question](#) on 29th June, however, Andrea Leadsom, a Minister for State at DECC, affirmed that while consulting with the Scottish Government, 'we intend that the final proposals are applied across Great Britain'.



More grace?

But here's the rub. The closure of ROCs requires primary legislation. It will be presented as part of the Energy Bill later in this session of parliament and this opens up some considerable wriggle room. A [DECC policy paper](#) published on 7 July says:

'We would welcome information and views from the onshore wind industry and other affected stakeholders before framing the terms of the legislation.'

We invite onshore wind developers to tell us about any of their projects affected by our proposals. In particular, we are interested in hearing from developers with projects that are currently in the planning system, but which have not yet secured planning consent, and to receive information and evidence relating to:

- *the stage that such projects have reached in the planning process, anticipated final planning decision dates, and expenditure incurred on projects as at the date of the Secretary of State's announcement;*
- *project timetables and anticipated dates for securing a grid connection offer and acceptance; and the prospects of such projects being in a position to accredit under the RO by 31 March 2017 and expected final investment decision dates.*

Doubtless this is a direct response to furious lobbying from the wind industry and the Scottish Government, and of course, it's impossible to know how genuine the invitation is. It would be a delicious irony if the UK Government were no more inclined to change its mind than developers are when they consult communities about wind farms, or indeed the Scottish Government is when it consults the public on planning policy.

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reNEws, the wind industry's leading trade publication, has mooted a compromise deal with the Scottish Government. An extension of the grace period specifically for Scottish projects would see these ROCs funded directly by Scotland. We don't believe the First Minister could justify such expenditure in these austere times, but it does show how desperate the industry is feeling.

George Osborne weighs in

Then things got a whole lot worse for the wind industry. In his budget last week, the Chancellor removed **the exemption to the Climate Change Levy** (CCL) which renewable energy generators had hitherto enjoyed. No one expected this, and in one fell swoop the Treasury clawed back about £450m/year in hidden subsidy from renewable operators. It's expected to rise to £910m by 2020/21.

Introduced in 2001 as part of the UK's Climate Change Programme, CCL is a tax on energy delivered to non-domestic users in the United Kingdom which renewable generators were exempt from. It's worth about £5.50 per MWh generated. From 1st August 2015 renewable operators will lose this tax break which makes up around 6% of onshore wind generators' revenues.

The wind industry of course screamed blue murder over these 'retrospective cuts on projects already up and running'. The media reported shares in Drax, the biomass company, nosediving by 28%, and in Infinis Energy, a major UK wind operator, by 21 %.

The coming ice age

While the pain for existing operators will be partially offset by the reduction in corporation tax announced in the same budget, no one should underestimate the impact on the investment climate for future wind development. The heady days under Labour and the Coalition when government was prepared to throw unlimited amounts of money at the wind industry are giving way to an ice age under the Conservatives.

Details of grace periods, and of how FiTs and CfDs will be reduced, are still unclear, but few doubt they are coming sooner rather than later. Indeed the Office for Budget Responsibility is now expecting low carbon subsidies to reach £10.3bn in

2020/2021 - 30 per cent higher than it predicted five months ago. This means the pot of money set aside to fund ROCs, FiTs and CfDs is running out much faster than expected, because of unprecedented levels of subsidy-grabbing, not least by onshore wind developers in Scotland.

Amber Rudd doesn't need an act of parliament to cap FiTs or CfDs to virtually zilch. Perhaps this is wishful thinking, and perhaps it won't be necessary. Already we are hearing reports of schemes such as Community Wind Power's 24-turbine Girthgate windfarm near Stow, which was about to go to public inquiry, being withdrawn.



The fight goes on....

It remains imperative that policy-making isn't monopolised by those who make their living from the wind industry.

In the next few days, we will be widening our call to Fergus Ewing for a summit for communities, businesses and organisations which would be adversely affected by any extension of grace periods (see pg 9). Another reason for such a summit is to put the case to Fergus Ewing for Scotland to adopt the same community veto on wind applications that is being proposed in England.

SAS will also be lobbying Amber Rudd not to cushion the ROCs cut with further grace periods, and to reduce the subsidies available through FiTs and CfDs.

As 'affected stakeholders', every single SAS Supporter is included in Amber Rudd's invitation for information and views before she frames her legislation on ROCs. We urge you to write to her individually, particularly if you have objected to a proposal a developer may be lobbying to have included in an extended grace period.

We are in the process of organizing a letter-writing campaign to Amber Rudd and Fergus Ewing, and will be asking for your help very soon. Keep your eyes peeled for our next update.



Windfarm impacts study at long last....

On July 2nd the much-anticipated and much-delayed *wind farm impacts study* was finally published. Scotland Against Spin's Graham Lang and Linda Holt were key members of its steering group because the study was prompted by Linda Holt's challenge to Fergus Ewing at a meeting with the minister during the SNP conference in Perth in 2012.

When Fergus Ewing asserted that the planning system ensures wind farms only go in the right places without unacceptable impacts on communities, Linda said he could test this with a before and after study. This led to Fergus Ewing commissioning this study. Visual, shadow flicker and noise impacts on neighbours as predicted in the applications for ten case study wind farms were compared with the actual impacts once these wind farms were operational.

Linda and Graham did sterling work on the steering group which sometimes sorely tested their patience. They were the only members who spoke up for the experience of people who suffer the worst and closest impacts from turbines. They were indefatigable in countering the various arguments of the wind industry representatives who tried at every point to limit what the study might discover and recommend.

The study's manager and Scottish Government representatives tried their best to hold the ring and be fair to all sides. Linda and Graham had no doubt about their commitment and sincerity in wanting the study to find out the truth about living next to turbines. However Fergus Ewing might sometimes enrage anti-wind farm campaigners, he did an excellent thing in commissioning and funding the study which puts him head and shoulders above ministers in other governments. The same is true of his officials.

The report is not a whitewash and it repays careful reading. For instance, even without site-specific monitoring in response to survey responses, these key points emerge about noise:

- In the survey of properties within 3km and sometimes 4km of a turbine - some within 4km - 35% said they could hear the turbines
- 30% of people living between 1km and 2km said they could hear the turbines
- Of those who could hear it 80% disliked the noise and 72% strongly disliked it
- At 4 out of 10 wind farms the measured noise was greater than predicted
- Amplitude Modulation was noted at 2 out of 3 sites and very clear at three of them
- 13% of respondents had complained about noise
- 54% of people could hear turbine noise in the range 35 to 40dB with 79% disliking it
- The wind farms were all designed to comply with ETSU R 97 and levels after construction were close to predicted levels forming part of the planning approval.

This shows, as one careful reader observed, that *'wind farms designed to comply with ETSU create sufficient noise at 1 to 2km to cause a high degree of annoyance and Amplitude Modulation is common, possibly occurring near 60% of wind farms.'*

The reports' recommendations (see next page) are pretty far-reaching, but of course the key issue is implementation. SAS will be monitoring the Minister and his officials closely and also asking for a follow-up study which takes actual noise measurements and investigates health impacts.

SAS Supporters could send the study to local planning authorities, and also use it as justification for asking local planning officers to demand better assessments of shadow/light impacts and impacts on residential impact amenity in applications for turbines and wind farms. Finally, the findings on noise strongly suggest a much more cautious approach should be taken by decision-makers about the distance between turbines and people's homes, and this would be worth bringing to the attention of local Councillors who sit on planning committees.

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Q: What did we all do for light before candles?

A: Electricity!



Major Recommendations of Study

- Guidance and methodology should be developed for residential visual impact surveys and also, where appropriate, the overall impact on residential amenity due to the combined visual, shadow flicker and noise effects of wind energy developments.
- Checklists are needed for planners at scoping and post submission stages of an LVIA (Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments) to ensure consistency and consideration of key matters.
- Consistent and clear reporting on the landscape and visual design objectives for a wind farm should be set out in assessments.
- Guidance, definitions and significance thresholds should be developed for the assessment of shadow flicker, shadow throw and light effects, including their presentation in public consultations.
- Assessments should give fuller consideration to the experiential impacts of wind farm noise, including its character.
- A review should be undertaken to establish whether the existing derivation of noise limits offers the appropriate balance between protection, simplicity and robustness.
- Good practice should be developed in terms of assessing modulated noise from wind turbines.
- Where noise issues are found to occur, these should be identified and assessed within clear timescales, and affected neighbours should be provided with regular and informative updates.
- Guidance should be developed to achieve consistency across competent authorities in respect of retention and accessibility of key documents throughout the consenting process, including post consent agreements.
- Decisions about micro-siting should be taken by competent authorities and recorded, based on the specific implications for visual, shadow-flicker and noise impacts, alongside other potential impacts and in relation to stated design objectives.

SAS Press Release:

'This study is the first of its kind in the world to put the the experience of people living near wind farms at its heart. For too long, people who have complained about wind farms have been dismissed as nimbies, and we applaud the Energy Minister Fergus Ewing for commissioning this work.

The recommendations show that the planning system is ill-equipped to address potentially adverse impacts on wind farm neighbours, and we urge the Scottish Government to lose no time in implementing them. For too long, decision-makers on wind farms have been asked to determine applications while blind-folded about the true impacts of placing enormous industrial machines near people's homes.

We share the disappointment of the hundreds of residents who

completed a survey for the study that the contractors refused to undertake new noise monitoring. We are not surprised that the contractors found the modelling in past and current noise assessments to be inadequate.

Noise emissions are the biggest fear for communities forced to host wind farms. Growing international evidence that turbine noise is a



health hazard underlines the pressing need for a full-scale investigation.

This study is an important step in the right direction but it has been plagued by delay and a lack of transparency over the data collected, where the commercial interests of the wind farm operators have trumped those of local communities. We call on Mr Ewing to continue the sterling work he has started with this study, devote adequate resources to investigating noise and health impacts and fast-track much-needed planning reform.

As Mr Ewing is holding a summit for wind developers about the impact of subsidy cuts, he might hold a similar summit for local communities to establish how neighbours of both existing and proposed wind turbines can be protected from harmful impacts.'

Peace and quiet for some.....

At SAS we always enjoy it when we hear of peoples' successes in dealing with turbine applications and problems. Very recently June and Ed Hall sent us their account of how they dealt with the issue of a small but very noisy turbine erected by their neighbour earlier this year. We've attached it for you to read, as it is a remarkable success story.

On the other hand, poor Rosie Milne and her neighbours who live beside West Knock in Aberdeenshire, one of the windfarms under scrutiny in the SG Impacts Study, is still suffering unacceptable noise, three years after her initial complaint.

Frustrated by Green Cat's unsuccessful attempts to mitigate the problem and Aberdeenshire Council's failure to enforce the Abatement Notice, she is now pursuing a private nuisance case funded by legal expenses cover on her home insurance. Rosie will give us a full update in the next Newsletter.

Continuous noise monitoring....

Continuous noise monitoring of wind farms has recently been in [the news](#), with Highland campaigner Lyndsey Ward promising to install permanent sound monitoring if ABO goes ahead with a proposed 25-turbine development near her home by Beaully.

Her plan was prompted by the experience of the [Den Brook Judicial Review Group](#) (DBJRG) which has been fighting RES's 9-turbine proposal in West Devon since before 2006. At the end of May DBJRG issued RES with a legal notice that should the project go ahead, permanent noise monitoring including both audible EAM and sub-audible infra-sound noise monitoring will be put in place. DBJRG warned RES that any breaches of planning conditions on noise would be pursued with vigour. Pre-announcing such public scrutiny creates a substantial business risk for the project and is liable to make securing the necessary investment both more difficult and more expensive.

DBJRG is drawing on [the experience of a community group](#) in ongoing monitoring of noise from 8 x 127m turbines at Cotton Farm in Cambridgeshire since their erection in 2013. Helped by Mike Stigwood of [MAS Environmental](#), Cotton Farm Action Group has carried out ground-breaking work and you can see hourly updates of the monitoring data [online](#).

Permanent noise monitoring is not a magic bullet and it's costly. Depending on the extent of monitoring, equipment and installation cost upward of £10,000 plus a monthly maintenance fee, and then there is the cost of analysing data and pursuing legal action against the operator in case of breaches. A more affordable option for those wanting to do their own monitoring is [using microphone accessories for iPads/ iPhones](#) which MAS Environmental has developed.

Another tack worth pursuing is to ask local authorities to insert a condition for permanent noise monitoring at the operator's expense into wind turbine consents. East Renfrewshire Council is currently considering an application for a single 50m turbine at Commore Bridge with a condition requiring permanent monitoring for the first year because the multiplicity of single turbines in the area made predicting noise impact impossible. Similarly the cumulative noise issues in the Sneddon Law saga have led to the insertion of a permanent monitoring condition there too.

Hot sounds of summer....

Noise and infrasound from wind turbines has become a really hot topic and the Daily Mail recently carried a report about new research that claims that human hearing actually stretches to lower registers than previously thought, about one octave lower to be precise. See what you think at the [Daily Mail online](#).

Meanwhile, in Australia, a Senate inquiry has found that infrasound and low frequency noise from turbines, and their possible impact on human health is an issue that needs 'independent, multi-disciplinary and high quality research' as 'an urgent priority.' [Friends Against Wind](#) carries a full report on their [website](#).

Noise Bulletin....

We have received many queries regarding Jack Pease's Noise Bulletin which is the only newsletter serving the needs of noise professionals working in the field of environmental noise, UK environmental health, nuisance, acoustics.

Although Aileen Jackson receives the Bulletin and is happy to pass on any important information which she feels may be of interest to SAS supporters via this Newsletter, we regret that as the Bulletin exists only because people pay for it, copyright laws mean we are very limited on what it is legal or reasonable to copy or forward.

Anyone may of course subscribe to the Bulletin, which has charity rates, at the [Environmental Publishing website](#)



People power...?

Consultation and engagement are buzzwords, beloved by developers, planners and politicians. Those on the sharp end, the ordinary punters for whom these processes supposedly exist, are less enamoured. The more we have 'engaged' with wind farm applications and government consultations, whether as individuals or as SAS, the less we can see the point.

Citizens' juries offer a fresh approach to the worn-out models for consultation and engagement we have become so familiar with. Like juries in trials, citizens' juries consist of ordinary people selected at random who come together to deliberate and decide on an issue. Relevant witnesses present information and are questioned and an advisory panel oversees the whole process to ensure it is neutral and balanced.

While citizens' juries, or similar set-ups, have been used practically in many countries, experimenting with different formats has spawned a thriving academic industry. Which is how a couple of years ago SAS was invited to join the stewarding board of a unique research project in which three citizens' juries were asked to come up with criteria for decision making about onshore wind farms in Scotland. Under the auspices of [ClimateXChange](#) and headed by Oliver Escobar at the University of Edinburgh, the project involved a team of academics from universities across Scotland. SAS also advised on the selection of expert witnesses, with Graham Lang himself stepping into the breach during jury sessions at Coldstream, Aberfeldy and Helensburgh.

A 250-page report on the [project](#) has now been published. The [research](#) found that 'the jurors were

eminently able to engage with a complex and contested debate in a very short period of time, and that the process was enjoyable for the participants, and spurred the jurors' interest in democracy and decision-making'. Primarily concerned with the mechanics of organising and conducting citizens' juries, the report concluded that they are a good thing. As Minister for Local Government and Community Empowerment Marco Biagi MSP said:

'Involving people and communities in decision-making leads to better results, more responsive services and gives communities the chance to have a say on how ideas are delivered. This exciting project offers valuable lessons which will help our efforts to boost participation in local democracy and improve community engagement.'

For us, the striking thing about the report is how wise and informed the principles were which the juries agreed on despite their different locations (close to an existing wind farm, close to a proposed one, and close to neither). They were critical, calling for impartial evidence,

monitoring and cost/benefit analysis in wind decision-making. They were also in favour of a balanced energy mix with control of, and limits on, wind farm development. Had SAS been recruiting, we would have collected a significant number of supporters from all three juries.

Disappointingly, the results of the juries' deliberations are covered in only one chapter (6). Given the repeated caveats that the principles cannot be taken to represent the views of the local area, to determine current policy or decisions on wind farms or to reflect the views of the project researchers, it's hard not to feel that the actual conclusions of the juries about wind development were, well, embarrassing and not exactly welcome for the authors and much of the stewarding board.

We're not holding our breath that Mr Biagi and his colleagues in the Scottish Government will be in a hurry to allow citizens' juries into the decision-making process, whether for wind farm planning or any other policy questions.

A fairer Scotland...?

Galloway Landscape and Renewable Energy (GLARE) recently wrote to us to tell us about a new consultation that the Scottish Government is undertaking which SAS Supporters should definitely take part in if they can.

'Anyone whose life has been blighted by windfarms should be able to say that getting rid of them would make living in Scotland fairer in every sense given their visual, environmental and economic impact on the landscape, ecology, tourism, local businesses and residents' well-being. Fairer too because so-called community benefit from these developments is spread around among people who do not necessarily have to live anywhere near the sight or sound of them and fairer to our neighbours in England who subsidise them whether they want to or not through their energy bills.

'...the people who suffer [from wind turbines] are those paying the bill for such subsidies, or those having to live under the blight of massive industrialisation of our beautiful country and the consequent devastation of our land and all the creatures it supports. Tell them, please!'

If you want to take part and have your say, then you can access the consultation at the [Scottish Government website](#).

From out the mouths of politicians....

The new UK Government's announcement that it will be closing the ROCs subsidy scheme a year early, and now the budget cuts to the exemption from the Climate Change Levy for renewable energy providers have thrown the Scottish Government's wind energy policy into disarray. Ms Sturgeon and Mr Ewing have been indignantly spouting much hot air, blaming the UK Government for punitively attempting to destroy the Scottish renewables industry. Interestingly though, in 2007 when the SNP were the ones in opposition at Holyrood, the hot air they spouted was somewhat different. Here are just some of Fergus Ewing's better quotes from back then:

'...[the] Scottish Executive has acted irresponsibly in paving the way for so much wind farm development.'

'...[the SNP] call for a tighter policy on wind energy with restrictions as to where they can be sited taking account of the scenic value of the landscape and its impact on tourism.'

'The SNP believes that many other forms of renewable energy are the future – not unconstrained wind farms.'

'Wind farms have, however, a very heavy environmental footprint not only blotting the landscape.....also in the release of substantial quantities of methane from peat landscapes'.

And our favourite....

'The Scottish Executive policy seems to be based on the Martini advert: any time, any place, anywhere.'

'All in all, I believe that the current wind farm free for all policy is flawed and I hope that at a new Scottish Executive led by my own party from May will call a halt to this.'

You really couldn't make it up!!

Source: [Strathspey Herald](#) - 'Anger-mounts-over-new-



Community summit in the offing...?

Every summer the Scottish Government Cabinet goes walk-about and meets the public at various 'suitable' events. On 6th July the SNP came to Fife and did their fair share of tree planting and hospital visiting before attending a public discussion event in the evening which was streamed live on YouTube.

SAS's Linda Holt asked that the Scottish Government hold a summit for communities and NGOs adversely affected by wind policy just as Fergus Ewing recently held a summit for more than 200 members of the wind industry to complain about Amber Rudd's proposed subsidy cuts. John Swinney managed to side swerve the question, but Nicola Sturgeon then said that Mr Ewing would indeed hear our perspectives.

(See Linda on [YouTube](#) at 55.20, John Swinney at 1.00.51 and Nicola Sturgeon at 1.04.12)

Despite giving her contact details, Linda is still waiting for a response, so SAS is now following up Ms Sturgeon's promise 'to hear both sides' with an open letter to Mr Ewing and we'll let you know how he responds.

Sceptics, not deniers....

However, just occasionally there is a rare instance of a politician actually knowing what they are talking about. MP David Davies took the trouble to tell the House of Commons at a recent debate on climate change exactly why we should all be healthily sceptical about the current climate change doctrine, taking Stephen Doughty, MP for Cardiff South to task along the way for his lack of accuracy about the International Panel on climate change's recent report.

If you haven't seen it, the video is on [Youtube](#) and well worth a watch!

The stuff of dreams....

If you've ever dreamed of being able to destroy those turbines cluttering up your landscape and causing you sleepless nights, well now you can – virtually!

Grand Theft Auto 5 seems to have a glitch (an Easter Egg?) that allows you to set about systematically knocking them over with your uber-rugged, off-road, armoured vehicle. You can see it on [Youtube](#).

We obviously can't recommend you try this for real but as a way to vent your frustrations online... ye cannae whack it!



Whitelee windfarm extension 3: public inquiry....

Firstly, a big thank you to all the SAS supporters who travelled miles to support us earlier this month in what was a heated and pivotal Public Inquiry into the water impacts of the third Whitelee Extension (WL3).

The WL3 windfarm is important because of the extensive research and documentation of changes that occurred in the water environment when the preceding WL windfarm and its extensions were constructed between 2006 and 2012. Despite employing the best mitigation practices, available from a responsible developer, this past history gives Scottish Power Renewables (SPR) the means to predict the impact that the WL3 development may also have on water supplies. The WL3 development (5x 111m turbines) is smaller than many windfarms planned elsewhere on water catchment areas in Scotland. The impacts at WL are unlikely to be unique in Scotland, so this Inquiry may have the potential to change the way such applications are examined in future with respect to water supplies. It may also improve how already consented windfarms are monitored and the attached planning conditions enforced.



SAS
Supporter,
Elliot Davis
under cross
examination
at the WL3
Public
Inquiry

SPR were at this Inquiry in force with their legal team, SPR executives and two senior geohydrologists. The opposing camp had two sets of objectors, John Campbell QC and no geohydrologists! By the time the Inquiry began on 16th June, we had



From left, John Campbell QC, Dr Rachel Connor and Tim Harrison

records of four private water supplies around WL which had lost their water supplies altogether, three that had had to drop boreholes to reinstate water supplies, many spring and borehole supplies that had been affected with silt and others that had been periodically affected by gross bacterial contamination, all coinciding with the various construction phases of WL windfarm.

Twenty-eight turbines are 'hosted' on the original WL windfarm site and 32 on the WL1 & 2 extension sites – all within a statutory drinking water protected area. Scottish Water had stated in a 2010 catchment risk assessment for Amlaird Water Treatment works that '*Windfarm construction has coincided with an increase in raw water colour at Amlaird and other Scottish Water treatment works*'. So our concerns about the impact of windfarm construction on reservoir raw water quality were not new.

Scottish Water had also expressed concern about the 800L of oil and 500L of antifreeze present within each turbine having the potential to leak into the catchment area. I have independently highlighted this as an ongoing risk during the operational phase of a windfarm.

Scottish Water have now begun a scoping exercise to build a new water pipe from Glasgow, to exclude the reservoirs on the Whitelee site from providing the water to more

than 34,000 customers in East Ayrshire. This is because the Amlaird water treatment works can no longer deal with the quality of the local raw water. All this was to play a crucial part in supporting our case.

Groundwater, monitored during construction of the original WL windfarm had also shown recorded changes of altered chemistry and a dramatic increase of minerals, as well as the unexplained presence of synthetic chemicals.

We had been trying, without success, to obtain the follow-up groundwater monitoring results for the WL windfarm extension construction phase from various sources, including Scottish Ministers, for over six months. Surprisingly, on day one of the Inquiry, SPR produced a late submission of pre-construction groundwater monitoring results, which unexpectedly showed the appearance of arsenic in groundwater on the windfarm site - above the statutory drinking water regulatory limits. Although we still don't have any further groundwater monitoring results to know whether those levels continued to rise or fall, I have since been in touch with Scottish Water who have confirmed that there were no instances of arsenic

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exceeding acceptable levels within the potable water from Amlaird water treatment works during that time period, which is reassuring for the public supply.

A further 'game changer' also occurred just before the inquiry, when we finally managed to obtain the *actual* laboratory results from the original windfarm groundwater monitoring. This showed that the extraordinarily high levels of DEHP (Bis 2-diethylhexylphthalate), which were 4-500 times allowable drinking water values, found in all boreholes during 2007-8 at the Whitelee site were unlikely to be due to laboratory error, as had been stated by SPR. The presence of this toxic chemical, which has been categorised by the EU as a '*substance of very high concern*' on the site has yet to be satisfactorily explained. (This was reported on in the [Sunday Times](#).)

At the Inquiry, it also transpired that SPR had submitted 1928 geology maps, instead of updated 2002 maps in all three Environmental Statements for WL windfarms (from 2006 to 2012) with the 1928 maps failing to show the presence of fault lines on both the existing windfarm sites and the proposed WL3 extension. These faults may have a crucial role in influencing groundwater flows upon which most of the seventy plus private water supplies at Whitelee will rely. These changes in groundwater flow may have contributed to some of the previous adverse effects involving private water supplies dependent on the windfarm site.

You can imagine that all this evidence resulted in a prolonged and aggressive cross-examination for me by Mr Colin Innes of Sheppard and Wedderburn for SPR. It went on for 5½ hours!

The jury (being the two Reporters

from the DPEA, Ms Frances McChlery and Mr Dannie Onn) is still out and we still have more work to do tidying up loose ends for our closing statement. Hopefully the facts will speak for themselves and will finally precipitate a thorough and open examination of all the evidence.

One of the most worrying issues to come out of the '*Whitelee saga*' is how all the regulatory authorities charged with protecting our water environment and public and private water supplies have failed spectacularly in that role. Under the terms of the Water Framework Directive, water quality at Whitelee actually deteriorated. For WL3, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) has been more concerned about peat management than private water supplies and to date, contrary to SEPA guidance (*Land Use Planning System SEPA Guidance Note 31*) many private water sources for both the preceding and the proposed WL3 windfarm remain uncharted and vulnerable to disruption from construction activity or windfarm operation.

Excluding the previous completely unacceptable loss of water to four households, the quality of water to other families dependent on their water supplies originating from the

Whitelee plateau was at times far worse than the raw water quality in a developing third world country – a sad indictment for Scotland. The various authorities failed to inform people of the dangers of drinking water contaminated with bacteria up to 730,000 coliforms/100ml. The regulatory limit is 0.

It says a lot that not a single one of these regulatory authorities, SEPA, Scottish Water, the Drinking Water Quality Regulator, East Ayrshire Council or East Renfrewshire Council were willing to participate in this WL3 Inquiry.

Regardless of the outcome of awarding consent from this Inquiry, the whole planning and statutory mechanism designed to prevent pollution and protect public and private water supplies from the effects of construction and industrialisation needs to be thoroughly scrutinised. It seems that local authorities have neither the resources nor expertise to be able to effectively monitor and enforce the planning conditions for windfarms which are designed to protect our health and amenity.

*Rachel Connor
June 2015*

More on WL3 on next page....



'If only they'd told us where to find it!'

Tim Harrison and Greta Roberts out on the Whitelee Ext 3 site visit

Whitelee windfarm extension 3: conditions hearing

A Section 75 is a legally binding agreement between the regulatory authority and the developer designed to ensure that the restoration and decommissioning costs of the site at the end of the development's life are guaranteed and do not fall to the members of the community through the council. This is a very contentious issue for East Ayrshire Council, which is now seeking to make several changes to Section 75 agreements with developers, including those of windfarms. Tim Harrison and Greta Roberts, who both attended and participated in the Whitelee Extension 3 hearing as near neighbours, took notice of EAC's new draft Section 75 agreement and made these comments:

Tim Harrison - 'EAC sought not only to include the issue of Community Benefit payments within such an agreement, but more importantly, to include the landowner. This could, in theory, expose landowners to being responsible for such costs and payments should the developer default for whatever reason.'

'Should EAC be successful at including the landowner in any section 75 agreement, it could result in landowners becoming reluctant to make their land available to developers for wind farm development for fear of being exposed financially to what could potentially be substantial payments.'

Greta Roberts – 'EAC's Draft Section 75 Agreement appears to be a new departure from the previous consents for 79 turbines in Whitelee Ext 1 and 2, both approved in 2009 and now operational. The previous SG consent letters had 'Conditions attached to the S36 Consent', covering duration of the consent, the removal after 6 months of non-functioning of equipment and mitigation of impacts on radar. These were followed by Planning Conditions, which included reference to a Bond to guarantee restoration of borrow pits and eventual site restoration after the windfarm is decommissioned.'

In the new draft conditions, 23 refers to the required Bond. However this is greatly enlarged upon in what now purports to be an S75:

Draft Minute of Agreement with Scottish Power Renewables and Landowners.

The guarantee amount for restoration to be calculated independently, index-linked and reviewed every 5 years. The Council to appoint a Planning Monitoring Officer (PMO) at SPR's expense.

PMO to produce a monthly photo report summarising works on site from beginning to end. Decommissioning & aftercare to be monitored. Compliance monitoring assessment at each period of development.

These new controls/safeguards are being applied to every environmentally destructive development in East Ayrshire including windfarms, opencast coal extraction, quarries and landfills. This is as a result of the coal fiasco which resulted in the abandonment of 16 sites totaling 2,000 hectares due to a lack of monitoring and planning enforcement, effective planning agreements and totally inadequate financial guarantees, compounded by the problem of developer insolvency.

Hopefully EAC's Minute of Agreement will be accepted and applied if the SG approves this development, although it begs the question of what obligations, if any, were imposed on landowners involved in the previous consents.

Other groups may find this S75 useful and can find full details at the [DPEA website](#).

Our grateful thanks go to Rachel, Greta, Tim, Elliot and the many others who have worked so hard in contributing to this Inquiry. Rachel is far too modest to say, but her testimony earned praise and congratulations from Scottish Power Renewable's own expert witness, Dr Alexander Lee of WSP UK LTD, so we are hoping that's a good omen!

Petition emerges at last...!

It has taken over two years of hard slog, discussions at numerous committee meetings at Holyrood and periods of consultation but at last Good Practice Guidance has been issued, arising from Aileen Jackson's Public Petition PE1469, that sought the Scottish Parliament's support in urging the Scottish Government to increase the neighbour notification distance for wind turbine proposals from the present 20 metres.

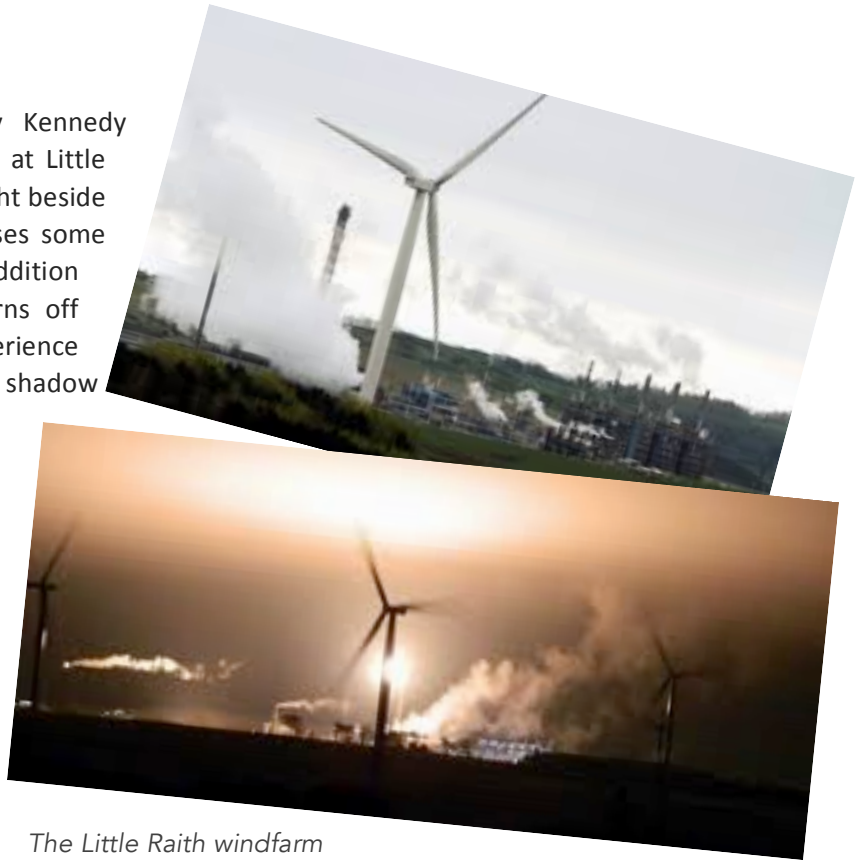
The recently published document provides guidance for local authorities, developers, landowners and community representatives and other relevant stakeholders on public engagement for sub-20MW wind turbine proposals. Although, as expected, the changes vary from those proposed in Aileen's Petition, it is certainly an improvement on existing guidance and policies. The document can be accessed at the [Scottish Government website](#).



Victory roll....

Last summer we reported on the plan by Kennedy Renewables to expand their existing windfarm at Little Raith in Fife, controversial because it sits right beside the Mossmoran petro-chemical plant and causes some very unusual problems for local residents. In addition to noise, when the petro-chemical plant burns off excess gas (flares) at night, local residents experience the almost unique phenomenon of night-time shadow flicker!

Kennedy Renewables, the developer, applied to add a further six turbines to the nine they are already operating but Fife Council planners indicated privately to them that they could not support the application. When the council failed to determine it within the allotted time, Kennedy Renewables appealed to the Scottish Government, a move that earned the condemnation of local MSP Alex Rowley and Lochgelly residents, including our own webmaster, James Glen who is Chair of Lochgelly Community Council.



*The Little Raith windfarm
and the Mossmoran petro-chemical plant*

Last week the result of the appeal was announced – and much to the relief of all those who had objected, it was turned down by government reporter, Sinead Lynch. She stated, ‘I consider the proposal would give rise to significant landscape and visual impacts, including cumulative impacts, and could pose a risk to aviation safety [at Edinburgh airport].’ She also added that the amount of electricity generation from the extension would only be modest and was not enough to justify non-compliance with other factors.

James described the decision as ‘very sensible’ and was particularly pleased that the DPEA supported Fife planning policy ‘which finds the local area now at saturation point for industrial scale wind turbines’ given that the locals are now facing another significant proposal within the area.

Here’s hoping this decision marks the beginning of the end for further developments in the area!

But the DPEA seems to be on a roll at the moment, and we have just received news that two other appeals have been refused by them; Barcloy Hill in Kirkcudbright, Dumfries and Galloway (5 x 115m turbines) and Beinn Mhor, near Tomich and Glen Affric (6 x 119.5m turbines).

The latter was especially pleasing to the John Muir Trust as a very significant part of the judgement to refuse was about landscape, visual and wild land impacts. The Reporter stated that,

‘The safeguarding of wild land is a significant national objective (see paragraph 101 above), and many of the representations contain passionate arguments about the importance of this asset for recreational visitors, tourism, and as part of Scotland’s national heritage. I have already concluded that the proposed wind farm would have a serious adverse effect on the enjoyment of recreational users of the high ground above the north side of Glen Affric, within parts of both the NSA and the SLA. For the same reasons, I agree that the proposal would have a serious adverse effect on the enjoyment of the wild land character of this area, again due to the close proximity of the new wind farm.’

Helen McDade, Head of Policy at JMT said; ‘This is one of the first decisions which has referred to the new Wild Land Areas map and Scottish Planning Policy and the national importance of wild land. So this is a really significant decision.’

Here’s hoping the DPEA keeps on refusing!



Methil monster motherless...?

Constructed during the Autumn of 2013, the Samsung-owned offshore test turbine (196m tall) situated on the shores of Methil in Fife (and christened the Methil Monster by many locals), has for most of its short life remained totally static. It was plagued by blade trouble in its first few months, and then shortly after repairs, was shut down again when it became unsurprisingly apparent that it was not able to comply with the noise conditions attached to the planning consent – it is only 65m from the nearest residential property! Samsung's application to have the noise conditions varied, allowing them to make more noise has not been granted by the Marine Consents Unit, and the operator has been asked to contact Scotland Against Spin, who objected to the variation, in order to 'discuss and resolve' the difficulties that an increase in noise levels will cause to local residents. To date they have not been in touch.

And now we can begin to see why, as just 18 months after it was built, Samsung announced on 2nd July that they are walking away from the turbine and from Fife Energy Park, where it had planned a £100 million turbine manufacturing plant. At the time of opening, then First Minister Alex Salmond announced that the deal - backed by £8m of Scottish Enterprise money - would create 500 jobs and the 'next generation' of offshore wind power'. In reality, Samsung only created 20 research and development jobs, and is now in active negotiation with Glasgow-based Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Catapult who confirmed that they are interested in acquiring the off-shore test turbine for research purposes. (You can read the full story in [The Courier](#) and in [FifeToday](#) online news, and be sure to read the comments!)

Again, unsurprisingly, Nicola Sturgeon and the SNP are busy trying to blame Westminster for the loss, and in response, Scotland Against Spin, which has been following this story very closely, recently had a letter published in *Scottish Energy News*:



Part of the blade of the test turbine is missing – seeing if it works with only two blades maybe?



Methil offshore (?) test turbine in Fife, aka the Methil Monster

'If the First Minister really wants to understand why Samsung is pulling out of Methil and Scotland's offshore wind industry still hasn't got off the ground, she needs to let go of her kneejerk responses that Westminster is to blame and that more public money is the answer.'

'The Scottish Government has already funnelled over £5 million of Scottish taxpayers' money into the Methil turbine.'

'White elephant' doesn't begin to describe something that has barely turned since its erection, and that is in a location on the Methil beach which cannot begin to replicate the technological challenges of being 10 miles out in the North Sea. Samsung is walking away from something it got for free.'

(See full letter in [The Scottish Energy News](#) – it's a cracker!)

Meanwhile, the turbine was recently photographed (left) by an SAS Supporter, with part of one of its blades missing. Quite why is unknown and we can only speculate that this indicates more problems for the troubled turbine. All the tests they do may be unable to escape the conclusion that it really just doesn't work very well.

Oh dear...!



Mochrum Fell saved....

It seems that Dumfries and Galloway may have reached something like a tipping point as yet another success story has come in. In the last newsletter, we brought you news of a protest outside Dumfries and Galloway council's planning meeting at which a wind proposal for Mochrum Fell was being discussed. We just heard from Elaine and Trevor Proctor, who organized the protest that following a site visit, the proposal has been unanimously refused by the Planning Committee in spite of the officer's recommendation for approval. Hurrah! Our congratulations to them.

'We hope that the developers have now got the message and don't try to appeal the decision to the Scottish Government.'

'We send a huge and most sincere thank you to everyone who helped and gave their support and expertise throughout the 3 years of campaigning. We are very grateful to the Save Loch Urr Association, TW312, SAS, the three Community Councils for their strong objections and especially to over 600 objectors who took the time and trouble to make their feelings known to help save Mochrum Fell and protect Dumfries & Galloway's beautiful landscape. We could not have done this without you.'

Elaine & Trevor

Our congratulations to Elaine, Trevor and the rest of the campaigners in Dumfries and Galloway – keep it up!

SAS oot and about....

A while ago, SAS was invited to take part on the Blairgowrie Open Day by Blairgowrie and Rattray Community Council. This was an event intended as an information day for local residents about many different issues and events in the area, not just windfarms. Perth and Kinross Council were present, as were a number of other organisations offering advice to the local community, and SAS went along to offer some balance to the wind development companies expected to be present.

One of the first visitors to our stand was an early supporter of SAS, Adrian Dirkzwager. Adrian lives in Blairgowrie and is an active objector to windfarm development in the area so it was good to meet him and catch up with news about the area.



Adrian Dirkzwager
with SAS's Marion Lang

Alison Petrie who is leading opposition to the proposed Green Burn windfarm also stopped by for a chat. The applicant for Green Burn, ABO Wind UK Limited were also expected to have a stand at the event but dropped out resulting in only one windfarm company attending. This was Wind Prospect who represent EDF Energy Renewables, the applicant at Saddle Hill. Not surprisingly, to us at least, statistics gathered at an exit poll found many more objectors to wind farms than supporters and SAS recruited a dozen new members as well as meeting other stoic long term supporters – a pleasant and uplifting day all round!

Black day at Blackdog....

While there has been plenty to cheer about in the last month, we should remind ourselves that not everything is going our way.

Two years ago, Nicola Brown from Blackdog contacted and joined SAS because she and a friend, Edna Booth wanted to fight against the development of electricity sub-stations in their community designed to support the Aberdeen offshore windfarm opposed by Donald Trump.

Despite Aberdeenshire Council rejecting the proposal, the developers went on to win an appeal. Lawyers, acting on behalf of Nicola and Edna, took the case to the Court of Session and argued that the Blackdog works could pose a danger to health, but Lady Smith said the earlier appeal had been considered legally and judgement went against the campaigners.

Our heartfelt commiserations to Nicola and Edna for this latest development, although we take off our hats to them for fighting such a difficult campaign.



100% renewables utopia...?

As the green lobby groups sense that the renewables revolution is politically losing favour, scenarios are being put forward to show that 100% renewable energy is achievable, perhaps only in a couple of decades. Whether or not one thinks this is desirable, would it really be achievable in a perfect world?

The simple answer is no. Why? Well, currently there is no way to build any renewable technology without fossil fuels, and if the machines that will deliver 100% renewable energy cannot be made without fossil fuels, then quite obviously we cannot get 100% renewable energy.

A typical wind turbine is made of a lot of steel, concrete and plastic. The United States Geological Survey has found that 1MW of wind energy on average requires 103 tonnes of stainless steel, 402 tonnes of concrete, 6.8 tonnes of fiberglass, 3 tonnes of copper and 20 tonnes of cast iron. Quite apart from the fact that fiberglass is made exclusively from petrochemicals requiring the extraction of oil and gas, it would seem that steel cannot be produced without fossil fuels either, and concrete cannot be made without the production of much carbon dioxide.

Steel is generally made from iron ore, extracted from the ground using huge machines made from... well, mostly steel, and then transported to a steel mill on bulk carriers made from... erm, steel, where it is converted into...yep, you guessed it, steel!

This is either done in a blast furnace or by direct reduction, both methods requiring large amounts of coal or natural gas. The blast furnace

is the mostly commonly used method globally, in which oxygen is removed from the iron ore using carbon monoxide, which combines with the oxygen to produce steel and carbon dioxide. For chemistry buffs the formula for this is $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3 + 3\text{CO} \rightarrow 2\text{Fe} + 3\text{CO}_2$ [Ed: Knew that 'O' level chemistry would come in useful one day!]

This is the material that is then used to produce the turbine towers, a process that simply wouldn't be possible without fossil fuels or the production of carbon dioxide.

Cement is one of the most widely

production, specifically the conversion of calcium carbonate (limestone) into calcium oxide (lime). Taking the carbon out of calcium carbonate leads to the unavoidable production of carbon dioxide: $\text{CaCO}_3 \rightarrow \text{CaO} + \text{CO}_2$

However desirable the idea of 100% renewables may be, we have to accept that we are currently unable to build any major infrastructure project, whether it is a road system, a nuclear plant or wind turbines without fossil fuels and the production of carbon dioxide.



Extracted iron ore might be transported on one of these, which uses a massive diesel powered engine. It is unlikely that solar or wind energy could ever provide the kind of power needed to fuel a ship or a blast furnace.

used materials in the world, with over 3.5 billion tonnes being produced globally each year, and one of the biggest uses of it being concrete production. Cement only makes up about 10-20% of the mass of concrete, but about 80% of its CO₂ emissions, so can we make cement without the emissions?

To make cement, you need big kilns and lots of heat, mostly provided by the burning of coal, gas and sometimes used tires, which obviously produce greenhouse gases. However, about half of the emissions from cement production are actually made from the chemical reactions that take place during its

Noise finale....

One final word on noise and then we'll be quiet for a bit. In Germany, Spiegel TV recently broadcast an item on the problems of infrasound

Although in German, you can catch the piece on [Youtube](#) with English subtitles if you need them.



The French Revolution again...?

To coincide with the UN Climate Summit in Paris this December, the Federation Environnement Durable (FED) is holding a forum entitled 'Wind turbines to save the climate?' at the Museum of Montmartre, near to the Moulin Rouge and its own world famous windmill.



Paris will be packed with journalists from around the globe, and the forum's purpose is to explain to them just why so many of the world's citizens are fighting against wind energy and turbines.

There will be three 90-minute conferences, focusing on why turbines do not make any meaningful contribution to the reduction of CO₂, how wind turbines destroy the natural and cultural heritages that they are supposed to be protecting, and how they imperil human health.

Although journalists are their target

Same old, same old....

Right at the end of June, we received a press release from the European Platform Against Windfarms (EPAW) about the construction of a French offshore windfarm.

The Fécamp development of 83 wind turbines over a total area of 67 km² will require 140,000 tons of concrete to be poured into the sea, 11 km from the French coast on benthic areas, the starting point of the food chain of marine fauna.

This fragile marine environment, whose natural wealth and biodiversity should be protected as a priority by the French *Ministère de l'Écologie et du Développement Durable* will, with the Government's full agreement, be methodically destroyed by the cement machines of the 'green business and sustainable development promoters'.

We keep asking, but no one seems to reply – just how is this industry saving the planet?

audience, there will be some availability to members of the general public and to anti-turbine NGOs. Further information from contact@montmartre21.fr.

'This is a rallying call to all anti-wind turbine NGOs in the world.'

'Game on....'

SAS Supporter, Shellie Correia is the founder of *Mothers Against Wind Turbines in Canada*, and recently joined 'Game On' radio host, Ron Stephens for an in-depth discussion about wind turbines, renewable energy and sustainable development which gives a very interesting account of her experiences and the current state of wind energy affairs in Canada. She had this to say about the interview: *'While the construction of the wind turbines in my community has been temporarily delayed, I am able to take the opportunity to continue educating the public, and letting people know what is happening to our communities, and why! Thank you, Ron, for helping me do this!'*

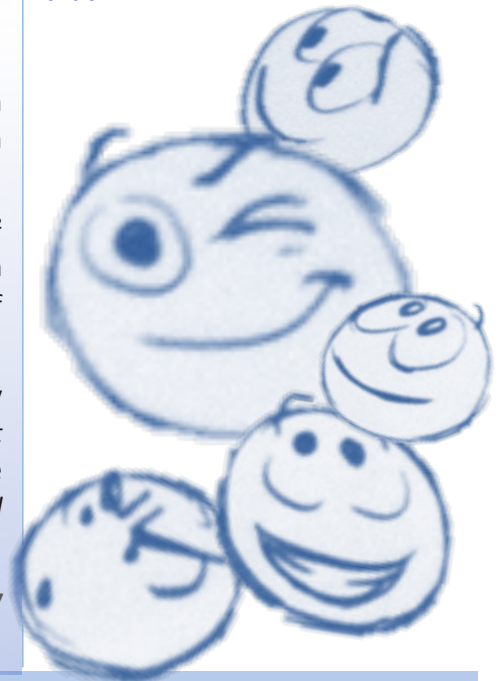
You can catch the full two-hour discussion on [YouTube](#) and you can read Shellie's blog at mothersagainstwindturbines.com

Global energy review....

In June, BP published their statistical review of world energy 2015. While there are plenty of statistics that present no surprise at all - China being one of the world's biggest energy consumers for instance – there are a few facts that are unexpected. For instance, on current trends, Saudia Arabia would become a net importer of oil by 2038 and the current per capita gas consumption in Iran easily demonstrates how little effect any reduction in fossil fuel usage in Europe will have.

And analysis of energy production does not reveal a very optimistic picture for renewables. In fact apart from the UK and Germany, there is little happening in this sector globally despite the enthusiastic spin of industry bodies. We know that the current UK government is looking to pull out of subsidising the wind industry here, and Germany is also experiencing difficulties with its *Energiewende*. In fact, the big global picture is not looking rosy at all!

You can see the [full BP statistical review here](#) and find a great analysis of it on Paul Homewood's blog, [Not a lot of people know that....](#)



German revolution falling apart...?

Over 800,000 Germans have now been disconnected from the grid as a result of fuel poverty, timber theft is now rife as many seek to reduce their dependence on electricity, industries are leaving because their energy costs are unsustainable, coal miners are protesting in the streets and the German Medical Board is being urged by its own parliament to support the halt of further turbine development until further detailed research can be completed on the health impacts of low frequency noise from turbines. (For some truly horrifying pictures of the kind of destruction that is occurring in Germany, take a look at the [EPAW](#) and [the Friends Against Wind](#) websites).

And yet, the number of people who still believe that wind energy is the utopian energy dream remains very high and voices protesting against it are difficult to hear. One of note though has been that of German physicist and climate scientist, and spokesman for the European Institute for Climate and Energy (EIKE), Prof Dr Horst-Joachim Lüdecke. Prior to a recent miners' demonstration in May, he published a sharply-worded attack on the government's anti-fossil fuel/nuclear power policy, urging his fellow Germans to sober up before they are all left freezing in the dark, with no jobs or health care. It's one that the SNP Government in Scotland should really take note of.

[Stop These Things](#) has a link to the original text in German, and also provides a translation of a large part of it alongside their own commentary - worth the read.

But the German green energy revolution is also in financial trouble and may well be running out of money. Not only are consumer energy prices going through the roof, traditional power plants that Germany is now realising it has to have, are needing ever more subsidies to stay viable and provide the essential baseload power.

The Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, a German newspaper, recently acquired an unpublished report by consultants from *Roland Berger* and the *World Energy Council*, which warns:

'The necessary equity funds for the expansion of the network infrastructure and offshore wind can probably be provided only with the participation of alternative and international investors. High risks however make it questionable whether the investment needs can be met at a sufficient capacity and speed.'

It also warns that at least 280 billion euros will be needed in the next 15 years to meet Germany's green goals, more if the political support wains. Funding for offshore wind faces 'high risk and market entry barriers' which 'contradict the risk profile of institutional investors'.

And don't forget money needed for the transmissions systems which the German Energy Agency now estimates will cost the country 28 to 43 billion euros by 2040.

Uwe Franke, president of the German wing of the World Energy Council, told *the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* that 'new investors would have to be found to ensure 'the energy transition and the security of supply.'

Question is – are there any now willing to take the risk?

Picking up the pieces....

The bitterly disappointing news that Sustainable Shetland's challenge to Viking Energy had failed has of course left many campaigners feeling just a little bit flat as they try to gather together funds to meet their legal costs.

Frank Hay, chair of Sustainable Shetland sent us this report on how things are looking for them as the new UK Government begins to leave its mark on wind development.

'We are hoping to clear our [financial] obligations by the end of September. What happens after that is a bit uncertain as a number of office bearers have indicated that they will be standing down.'

'Worryingly for us here in Shetland is the fact that the Shetland Charitable Trust, part owners of VE, are cutting budgets to organisations that they support. (See report in the [Shetland News](#).) Locally it is felt that this is due in part to the Trust preparing to invest again in Viking Energy. Already they have contributed £10 million towards the project with nothing to show for it.'

'The trustees of the Trust have been carefully selected so that there are a good number of windfarm supporters and Sustainable Shetland has been kept well away. A suggestion that trustees should be democratically elected was rejected, we suspect, to keep us away from it. So much for local democracy!'

'Interesting times with the new government making noises against wind. It will be interesting to see what develops.'

'I hope that it will be good for us!'

We do too and think that the beleaguered people of Sustainable Shetland deserve some good news after all their hard work – here's hoping!